

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 181878
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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 181878

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, ASEAN

SUBJECT: ASEAN MINISTERIAL PREPARATIONS -- NATIONAL
PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON

REF: GEBER/MCCONVILLE TELECON OF JULY 17

1. REGARDING PROCEDURES FOR NPC LUNCHEON, THE
PRESIDENT OF THE NPC RECEIVES WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM
THE FLOOR. HE SELECTS AND GROUPS THESE QUESTIONS AND
DIRECTS THEM TO VISITORS SITTING AT THE PODIUM. THESE
QUESTIONS CAN BE DIRECTED TO SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS OR TO
ANY VISITOR. NO EFFORT IS MADE TO SCREEN THE QUESTIONS
AND THE NPC WOULD BE MOST RELUCTANT TO DO SO. IN SHORT,
ASEAN PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ANSWER
QUESTIONS ON ANY RELEVANT SUBJECT.

2. COMMENT: THE DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT WANT TO INDICATE
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PAGE 02 STATE 181878

TO THE NPC THAT ASEAN WOULD PREFER NOT TO ADDRESS
QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC SUBJECTS. THIS WOULD NOT BE
COMPATIBLE WITH THE NPC GROUND RULES. END COMMENT.

3. TWO ASEAN SPOKESMEN WILL EACH BE GIVEN TEN MINUTES OF
OPENING REMARKS BEFORE QUESTION PERIOD. SPOKESMEN SHOULD

BE PREPARED TO DELIVER CONCISE, BUT CONCRETE BRIEFING ON GOALS, PROBLEMS AND ISSUES FACING ASEAN. DEGREE TO WHICH SPEAKERS ARE ABLE TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON POSITIVE ASPECTS OF ASEAN MEETING, WILL DETERMINE AMOUNT OF FAVORABLE PRESS TREATMENT. HOWEVER, ASEAN PARTICIPANTS SHOULD EXPECT QUESTIONS ON WHOLE RANGE OF ASEAN ISSUES. CHRISTOPHER

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